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ABSTRACT

These proceedings contain 15 papers presented at a conference that included three general sessions and concurrent sessions for task forces on international adult education, computers, research, instructional improvement, self-directed learning, human resources development, and theory building. Some papers appear only as summarized versions. Titles and authors are as follows: "Emergence of Human Resource Development: Threat of Challenge to the Profession" (Nadler); "A Twenty-Five Year Retrospective Look at Self-Directed Learning" (Houle); "Putting Self-Directed Learning into Practice" (Knowles); "Self-Directed Adult Learning: A Critical Paradigm Revisited" (Caffarella, O'Donnell); "Philosophical Foundations of Research Design" (McElhinney); "Use and Applications of Computers and New Technologies" (Lewis, Oaklief); "Streamlining Academic Advising" (Oaklief); "Demystification of Computers: Courseware Evaluation" (Weiner); "Computer-Assisted Instruction" (Askov); "Record-Keeping: Spreadsheets and Data Bases" (Whinfield); "Networking/Telecommunications" (Sork); "International Adult Education Task Force: Reports and Reflections on International Conferences"; "An American in Paris--UNESCO 1985" (Niemi); "Building a New Organization across Cultures" (Marsick); and "The United Nations Women's Decade Conference and the NGO (Nongovernmental Organizations) Forum '85, Nairobi, Kenya" (Cassara). (YLB)

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# COMMISSION OF PROFESSORS OF ADULT EDUCATION: PROCEEDINGS OF THE 1985 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

NOVEMBER 4-6, 1985
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

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# COMMISSION OF PROFESSORS OF ADULT EDUCATION: PROCEEDINGS OF THE 1985 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The 1985 annual conference of the Commission of the Professors of Adult Education was held on November 4-6, 1985, at the Marc Plaza Hotel, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The program included three general sessions, a business meeting, and concurrent sessions for several task forces: (a) International Adult Education, (b) Computers, (c) Research, (d) Instructional Improvement, (e) Self-Directed Learning, (g) Human Resource Development, and (h) Theory Building.

Professors who attended the 1985 conference will recognize that these Proceedings do not include all the papers presented. In some instances, presenters were not able to comply with the request to submit a summarized version of their paper for inclusion.

The 1985 Proceedings is the first attempt to collect and prepare for wider distribution papers presented at the annual Commission conferences. The papers included in this Proceedings are evidence of the wisdom of this decision. Whether this practice should be continued for the 1986 conference will depend on your response to this effort. Share your thinking about the importance of an annual Proceedings with the current Commission Chair, John Niemi.

Harold Stubblefield, Compiler

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# EMERGENCE OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT: THREAT OF CHALLENGE TO THE PROFESSION?

Leonard Nadler

The field of Human Resource Development (HRD) has been around for a long time but is STILL not fully understood. Part of the difficulty is the lack of agreement on defining the field - similar to the problem with Adult Education.

Based on my work in this area over the past 40 years, the following definition has evolved:

Human Resource Development is defined as:
- o organized learning experiences
- o in a definite time period
- o to increase the possibility of:
  - improving job performance
  - growth

Organized learning experiences - The emphasis here is on learning which is the essential relationship to the field of Adult Education.

In a definite time period - This is important, whether the learning is formal or informal. If a person is to learn, it is essential that a clearly identified, definite period be set aside for that learning. The period may vary from 15 minutes to a year or more, but the learner and those involved should all have a mutual expectation as to how long that learning period will be.

To increase the possibility of - HRD people cannot and should not promise that as a result of the learning experience, performance will change! Performance is affected by many things, and most of them are outside of the control of the HRD people - and should be. HRD people are not supervising those outside the HRD unit. The supervisor is a prime factor in influencing employee performance.

Improving job performance - Most of HRD is directly concerned with job performance - either the present job or a future job. The organization provides resources for HRD essentially to see some change in job performance. This is the major and most common use of HRD by an organization.

Growth - There are two elements to growth. The first is the organization. That is, an organization can provide learning for employees that is not directly related to the present job or a future job. Rather, it is to help the individual grow so as to be able to move generally with the organization. It does not mean career development, as that activity usually related

to future jobs in the organization. Rather, it is the recognition that change is constantly with us and that there are some people in the organization who should be stimulated to think of non-job related growth, so they will be ready to move with the organization in any number of unpredictable directions.

The other element of growth is the individual. This area enlarges and shrinks depending upon the economy and the nature of the work force. In essence, it is concerned with the fact that many people seek a variety of non-job related learning experiences to achieve an inner satisfaction. It can be argued whether it is the reponsibility of the employing organization to provide this. It is a decision that reflects the culture of the country and the organization, as well as the availability of resources for this kind of learning.

The essential difference between this definition, and those generally applied to the field of Adult Education is that HRD is employer sponsored and mainly for employees. The two areas are similar in that both are concerned with adult learning.

## Activity Areas in HRD

There are specific areas of activity within HRD and it is important to make the distinctions.

The three activity areas provide learning:

- To improve performance on the present job of the individual
- To prepare an individual for an identified job in the not too distant future
- To encourage general growth not related to any specific job

We are talking of concepts and putting labels on them. Let us focus on the concepts rather than on the labels.

- Training = learning related to present job
- Education = learning to prepare the individual for a different but identified job
- Development = learning for growth of the individual, but not related to a specific present or future job

Let us look at the people in the field. Research, going back many years, has provided a model. Part of the research was my doctoral dissertation in 1958.

The model, as revised up to the present, indicates three major roles and twelve sub-roles. They are:

Learning Specialist

- o Facilitator of Learning
- o Designer of Learning Programs
- o Developer of Instructional Strategies

Manager of HRD

- o Developer of HRD Policy
- o Supervisor of Programs
- o Maintainer of Relations
- o Developer of HRD Personnel
- o Arranger of Facilities and Finance Consultant

Consultant

- o Expert
- o Advocate
- o Stimulator
- o Change Agent

The Learning Specialist and Consultant are obviously in the area of adult learning. The Manager, in this model, is one who is managing adult learning programs within a company or similar organization.

Other research has enabled us to identify three kinds (categories) of people in the field.

Category I - Professionally Identified - These are HRD people who see this as their professional field. They take degrees in HRD (or Adult Education) and see themselves spending many years in this field.

Category II - Organizationally Identified - These are not HRD people but have been assigned to that function by their employers. The will spend only a limited amount of time in the HRD field, usually no more than 5 years, but it may be as short as six months.

Category III - Collateral Duties - These are others in the organization who sometimes use learning as a way of reaching their goals. For example, the Safety Director who also conducts a safety training program.

## Conclusion

The field of HRD involves about 1 million people in the U.S. most of whom are Category II. There are, however, a significant number of Category I people who could benefit from graduate work in HRD/Adult Education.

In the U.S., it is estimated that over $200 billion is spent annually on HRD. We have a responsibility, as professors of Adult Education, to help those who are providing adult learning in the work place.

# A TWENTY-FIVE YEAR RETROSPECTIVE LOOK AT SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING

Cyril O. Houle

The sponsors of this meeting have asked me to focus my remarks on the impact of the small book, The Inquiring Mind, first presented as a series of lectures here in Milwaukee in 1960, a quarter of a century ago. It has been suggested that this book was important in helping to create a concern for self-directed learning on the part of modern educators of adults. Any such attribution is far too generous. As I recall the state of the field in 1960, the idea that men and women should assume responsibility for their own learning was widely accepted, though it may not have been the subject of much research. The concept was, in fact, understood as being valid at two levels.

First, and more broadly, it was often asserted that the adult as a mature person should select whatever exposures to education he or she wishes to choose, whether they occur in individual, dyadic, group, institutional, or mass situations. It was in this respect that adult education was thought by many people to differ from childhood education and was one of the bases sometimes used in distinction between voluntary and compulsory education, the former often thought to be synonymous with adult education itself. Another important distinction could be made, though it was not stressed at the time. Education resulting from the deliberate choices of the individual could be distinguished from conditioning, habit formation, and other processes of personal change which are not consciously willed but which some psychologists would consider to be the proper concern of learning theory.

Second, and more specifically, self-directed learning was defined as including only those processes in which the individual or the group accepts responsibility for designing the educative activity itself. "Hitting the books," a venerable piece of academic slang, suggests that the learner is going to tackle these artifacts of study in a sequence and at a rate which appear appropriate to a specific purpose. Additional illustrations of this kind of self-directed learning are educative travel, self-disciplined practice of an art or skill, and selective attendance at lectures or other art-forms. As I have shown in Patterns of Learning, they are all ancient in both theory and practice.

Why then would anyone think that The Inquiring Mind represented any departure? There are doubtless many answers but two are worth mentioning here. The institution and the community as facilitators of learning had held the attention of many thoughtful scholars and practical administrators in the field ever since the nineteen-thirties. The small group as both provider and stimulus to education had had much attention in theory and practice during the 'forties and 'fifties. Perhaps these lines of

investigation had been over-stressed and a new research theme was needed. Second, self-directed learning had earlier been sternly read out of the field of adult education by some of its senior thinkers, most notably by that revered leader, Coolie Verner, who, for reasons which he specified fully, found that it did not fit within "change process," a then-popular theory which he felt should be the root idea of the field. The effort to reconcile Verner's views with those of other analysts was the specific cause which led Allen Tough to undertake the work which has broadened out so greatly under his stimulus. But while Tough did read the transcripts of the 22 interviews studied in The Inquiring Mind, neither it nor its raw data did more than help shape a research process which he already had well under way.

So far as the broader definition of self-directed learning was concerned, the book may have helped to stimulate three lines of investigation which moved well beyond the limited ideas which I presented a quarter century ago.

The first of these had to do with the measurement of the extent of total participation in learning activities by individuals. My 22 case studies were all made of people who were well known to be avid continuing learners. The making of such a selection suggests the existence of some kind of continuum ranging from those who do little or no conscious learning to those whose waking time is almost wholly consumed by such activities. It was not long before investigators were asking whether such a continuum actually exists. A number of instruments were fashioned to measure the depth and spread of participation in adult education, broadly defined. These instruments were administered, in both explicit and masked form, to various groups of adults, the most elaborate study in this series being carried out by Ann Litchfield. The general conclusion was that, so far as participation in adult education is concerned, all individuals fall somewhere along a curve which is basically normal but which tends to have a bunching of cases at the lower end and a long spread of individuals out to the right. The same curve appears no matter what instrument of measurement is used and no matter what population of adults is tested.

The second line of investigation flowing from my focus on the individual has to do with whether or not people have basic orientations to education which underlie the specific motivations which lead them to action or inaction as they respond to various opportunities to learn. Goal-orientation, learning-orientation, and activity-orientation were declared in the book to be dominant ideas about education held by most avid learners. This idea has stimulated a good deal of further investigation, partly, I suspect, because statistical methods for investigating the problem were so conveniently at hand. Also this analysis gave rise to some conclusions which at that

time were rather troubling. Teachers of adults would have to rethink their instructional patterns when they realized that almost every class contains students who differ fundamentally from one another in how they think about the values of education. Also educators of adults are not exempt from similar differences in orientation, a fact which helped explain some of the schisms in the field. Roger Boshier sustained an interest in the study of orientations longer than anyone else. He made investigations of his own and has provided creative summaries and interpretations of the literature on this theme which has now proved to be so voluminous.

The third line of investigation (a very short line) arose from my finding that many people engage in learning despite what they regard as dedicated opposition by the people they know best. In the only follow-up study of which I am aware, Eva Goble found that this sense of opposition by family and friends does in fact exist among both participants and non-participants in learning activities but that it is statistically no greater among the non-participants than among the participants. Put in the vernacular: If you want to learn, you won't let the negative opinions of your daily associates stop you from doing so. I don't wholly believe this finding but Dr. Goble had the data to demonstrate her conclusion. The further study of the material and social environments of self-directed learners might will give rise to some interesting--and perhaps surprising--conclusions.

These lines of research and others encouraged by The Inquiring Mind have now branched off on their own as new conclusions led to new hypotheses. In carrying out the analytical study of adult education, we need sequential studies, each building on its predecessors but adding something new to their messages. Without such sequences and their inter-meshing and mutual reinforcement, we cannot build the solid base of our practical discipline and assist the people who think they need our help. When an investigator (most typically a doctoral student) tries to find a research problem on which to work, he or she can examine one of the excellent problem inventories which our field possesses, such as those prepared by Burton Kreitlow and the College Board. An even more fruitful source of help, I think, is to follow some strand of previous speculation or research to find out how best to enrich it.

Naturally I am gratified if my little book has helped save many fine people from facing the consequences of not publishing. I do want to end, however, by nailing down a point implicit in all that has gone before. Any research rewards flowing from The Inquiring Mind have resulted not from the amplification of its general and tentative ideas but from what readers brought to it in designing their own research. If the book helped them to be creative, I am delighted. Their work has certainly contributed to my own education even as new investigations have helped to turn the book itself into a period piece.

# PUTTING SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING INTO PRACTICE

Malcolm S. Knowles

The first thing we have learned from research is that self-directed learning is a natural and universal activity on the part of adults (Tough, Penland, Peters, and others). It is estimated that about 85 percent of what adults learn they learn by self-directed inquiry. The implication of this finding for practice is that we don't have to motivate adults to learn; indeed, the need to keep growing is probably genetically imbedded, and the most visible way to keep growing is to keep learning. Research, especially in clinical psychology, strongly suggests that normal adults have a deep psychological need to be self-directing.

A second thing that we have learned from experience (action research) is that when adults enter into a program of formal instruction (school, college, training events), they enter with the expectation of being taught. Even though they may be self-directing in every other aspect of their lives--as worker, spouse, parent, citizen, and leisure-time user, whenever they enter into a situation which they perceive to be "educational" they hark back to their previous educational experience and assume a dependent role. Schooling has conditioned them to perceive the role of student as a dependent role. And if they find themselves in a situation in which they are expected to take responsibility for planning and carrying on their own learning, they experience confusion, anxiety, and resentment.

The implication of this finding for practice is the importance of building into the entry process a reorientation to the meaning and strategies of learning and an understanding of the difference between learning and being taught. Effective orientation programs typically contain both a cognitive and a skill dimension. The cognitive dimension provides an intellectual understanding of learning as a process of active inquiry, not a process of submissively receiving transmitted information. It makes a case for what we learn through our own initiative as being as respectable as what we are handed on a silver platter--and it is usually better understood, more internalized, more useful, and retained longer.

The skill dimension provides opportunities for practicing the skills of self-directed inquiry and experiencing success with self-planned learning. Among the required skills are the ability to be objective about one's self and nondefensive (e.g., sensitivity training); the ability to diagnose one's own learning needs; the ability to translate learning needs into learning objectives; the ability to identify appropriate resources for different kinds of objectives and to choose appropriate strategies

for utilizing these resources (e.g., planning skills); the ability to make use of both material and human resources proactively; and the ability to evaluate one's own learning.

Experience also indicates the importance of providing self-directed learners with psychic support systems, such as peer networks, supportive facilitators and resource persons, and supportive institutional policies and procedures.

Finally, perhaps the most critical element in a self-directed learning program is the provision of helpers (e.g., faculty) who define their role as being to facilitate self-directed learners. To make this point concretely, I am appending a short piece I did on "The Day I Changed from Teacher to Facilitator of Learning."

## SELF-DIRECTED ADULT LEARNING: A CRITICAL PARADIGM REVISITED

Rosemary S. Caffarella Judith M. O'Donnell

The purpose of this paper is to provide an analysis of self-directed learning research, categorize the research, and offer suggestions for future directions researchers should follow in this area. The methodology for the review was to first define the parameters for the study. Research was defined as data-based, as well as serious conceptual articles. The three major published reviews of literature (Tough, 1978; Mocker and Spear, 1982; and Brookfield, 1984b) served as the resource base, coupled with a computer search. Initial reliance was placed on these critical reviews and criticisms in order for this review to build upon existing analyses. A thorough review of the original source was also completed.

The following research categories emerged from this review: verification studies (in the Tough tradition); nature of the method of self-directed learning (the how questions); nature of the individual learner (the who and what questions); nature of the philosophical position (perspectives on the process); and, policy questions (the role of the educator, institutions, and society). These categories have brought together many of the issues highlighted in the reviews of Mocker and Spear (1982) and Brookfield (1984b).

### VERIFICATION

A number of criticisms have been aimed at the verification studies. These include: the populations are primarily middle class; the Tough schedule calls for probing and prompting which contaminates the findings; the subjects must primarily look back in time to reflect on their learning experiences, and that in general we have done enough verification.

Verification studies are needed using as subjects people from different social classes, ethnic groups and cultural backgrounds. In addition, different data collection mechanisms, other than the Tough instrument, should be explored.

NATURE OF THE METHOD

Research on the nature of the method of self-directed learning answers such questions as: how do adults go about planning learning projects; how do they identify and use resources; and how can we improve or increase the competencies or skills needed for self-directed learning.

Additional work is needed for a better understanding of how learners plan and organize their learning, the types of planning used, and how competencies necessary for self-directed learning are developed and enhanced.

NATURE OF THE INDIVIDUAL

Research into the nature of the individual learner asks the who and what questions. Basically the category looks to an understanding of the individual's characteristics and styles in order to get a better feel for the learner. Seven sub-categories emerged from the review of literature in this area: demographic data, learning or cognitive style, readiness, life satisfaction, locus of control, psychological health, and locus of control.

This is a fertile area for further research. Viewing the concept of self-directed learning as a personality construct is an especially exciting idea.

NATURE OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL POSITION

This conceptual area addresses the philosophical orientation of the concept of self-directed learning. When conceptual articles are scanned through what might be referred to as one's philosophy of adult education, various theoretical perspectives take root and seem to guide the research or research questions. We must do the empirical research based on our own perspective; or, perhaps better yet, researchers with different perspectives need to collaborate in discovering the intersection points between philosophies and start building a new empirical base from there.

POLICY QUESTIONS

Conceptual articles on policy related to self-directed learning asks the questions: what is the role of the adult educator, what are the involvement parameters for educational institutions, and what does the concept of self-directed learning mean to society as a whole. It is important to note that while

the questions have grown out of issues and concerns generated by empirical work, policy is still in an evolving conceptual stage. To our knowledge, there have been no data based studies in policy formation.

Policy questions need to be faced by researchers in adult education as we piece our research base together.

CONCLUSIONS

The authors conclude that the goal of the research at this stage in our knowledge should be a combination of a rich generation of experimentation and further theory building. There is a need to expand our repertoire of design and methodologies in the study of self-directed learning. Depending on the nature of the research problem, both indepth qualitative and more sophisticated quantitative studies are needed. All research categories need further exploration.

(This is a summary of the paper given. A copy of the full paper can be obtained from Rosemary S. Caffarella, Associate Professor, Box 2020, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia.)

## PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF RESEARCH DESIGN

James H. McElhinney

Research is a way of answering questions that yield dependable answers. Research deals with important questions in intelligent and systematic ways. Research into human behavior is inevitably a complex mixture of science and art. Findings of research in human behavior originate in the sources of data. Findings are also influenced as research decisions are made by the researcher. Research decisions have bases in the philosophy of the research. (Philosophy here is "The science which investigates the facts and principles of reality and of human nature and conduct.")

Gradually the philosophical foundations of research design are broadening. The four books listed at the end of this article illustrate this broadening. There is further evidence that approximately 40% of the research reports published in the five volumes of Adult Education Quarterly 1979-85 can be classified as qualitative or naturalistic. Departing from narrower philosophical limitations has the potential to allow the use of the power of many research designs to examine a wider range of important topics in adult education. Broadening the philosophical foundations of research makes it necessary to answer questions about research designs that were formerly outside the limits of approved designs, and the broadening requires the reexamination of formerly acceptable answers to questions inside the previous limits.

The largest of these philosophical questions needing reexamination is: Does important human behavior occur twice? Are the important behaviors of people consistent over time? Are behaviors in similar situations uniform across individuals and groups? Are the problems people face repeated uniformly over time or are people resourceful enough to respond to similar problems in unique ways. Answers to these questions may mean that the use of the concepts of replication, generalization and prediction need to be reexamined.

Is the use of the word science an asset or a liability in the systematic study of human behavior? Definitions of the word science were increasing in precision when used by those systematically studying the physical and biological realms. Requiring science to have one set of research meanings in the physical sciences and another set of research meanings in the study of behavior may cloud our thinking and our communication. Perhaps if we avoided the word science as we examine the philosophical foundations of research design for studying human behavior we could focus more clearly on concepts labeled with terms that have no applications outside of the study of behavior. Would we move more rapidly in improving our thinking about and our practice of research on human behavior if we reexamine some of our expectations.

Should we expect more of behavioral research as we develop consumers and producers of research? Is it unrealistic to expect a few courses with research or statistics in their titles to carry most of the burden of producing research competence? Limiting the practice of research competencies to a few courses can imply that research is remote, even mystical, and can only be successfully practiced by a few. Can faculty help students become competent in quantitative research without conveying that quantitative is the only legitimate design? Often our most successful students of research emerge from their studies with competence in a family of closely related research designs and with an almost religious faith in these designs to the rejection of all others.

Back to the developing of research competence; can each student in every graduate class select and state an important question, systematically collect valid data, and draw conclusions based on evidence as an integral part of his/her study? Would this practice of research processes produce better quality in master's thesis and doctoral dissertations?

If the philosophical foundations of research design in adult education are in flux, there are many philosophical questions that require reexamination and additional questions to attend. Perhaps the questions above are some of the ones deserving attention.

Books expressing or implying changes in the Philosophical foundations of research design include:

1. Garth Morgan's Beyond Method, Strategies for Social Research, Sage, 1983
2. David R. Krathwohl's Social and Behavioral Science Research, Jossey-Bass, 1985.
3. Edward E. Lawler III Doing Research that is Useful for Theory and Practice, Jossey-Bass, 1985.
4. Egon Gruba's Naturalistic Inquiry, Sage, 1985.

## USE AND APPLICATIONS OF COMPUTERS AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES

Linda Lewis and Charles Oaklief

One of the goals of the Computer Task Force is to serve as a research and information resource to explore the use and application of computers and the new technologies. Based on an assessment of members' interests and needs, a hands-on workshop was offered in Milwaukee to allow participants an opportunity to explore the multiple dimensions of computer usage. An open classroom, consisting of 5 learning centers, was designed to create an array of learning opportunities. Participants were able to rotate every 20 minutes to a different activity area in order to gain exposure to a variety of computer-related topics. The format allowed participants to draw upon the expertise of the presenter while simultaneously sharing their own computer experiences with colleagues.

## STREAMLINING ACADEMIC ADVISING

Charles Oaklief

The presentation described a method of supporting the graduate student advisor in tracking the progress of graduate students using an IBM-PC computer. With the computer and "locally developed" software, the advisor may select student progress information from the data file using the student's identification number or last name. Modification and/or updating of information can be accomplished quickly and easily. Letters describing necessary information needs or letters of encouragement can be written using information from selected student records/files contained in the software profile.

The use of personal computers in academic advising not only saves considerable time but adds to the validity and value of the graduate advising function in higher adult education.

## DEMYSTIFICATION OF COMPUTERS: COURSEWARE EVALUATION

Roberta Weiner

The workshop provided an overview of computers and a "guide for the perplexed." A short history of computer development from first generation computers to the intriguing and still elusive, but soon to be a reality, fifth generation computer (artifical intelligence) was given. The Feigenbaum and McClintoch book on the fifth generation computers and the Japanese commitment was one among many bibliographic references distributed that talk to technology and its ramifications for society and education. Books, journals, and some new software were displayed and shared.

In addition, the workshop provided overheads and hand-outs that explained "computer phobia," defined terminology, and reviewed several software evaluation checklists. The criteria for selecting educational software and the ability to identify types of programs (tutorial, simulation, etc.) for specific education purposes are more important to most teachers and administrators than the ability to program.

## COMPUTER-ASSISTED INSTRUCTION

Nicki Askov

For those interested in computer-assisted instruction, Pennsylvania State University has developed CAI courseware for teaching high frequency and functional vocabulary to adult non-readers. The courseware runs on the Apple IIe with two disc drives, color monitor, and ECHO GP voice synthesizer.

The modules are as follows: 1) Computer usage; 2) Picturable words associated with pictures and presented in sentences; 3) Non-picturable words presented in the context of high-interest stories; 4) Employment application words; 5) Word building and word families; 6) Word processing.

A diagnostic-prescriptive record-keeping system keeps track of all student responses as well as response time. Students demonstrating mastery of a set of words on a pretest may bypass the instructional activities. All records and products of the word processing may be printed by the teacher.

## RECORD-KEEPING: SPREADSHEETS AND DATA BASES

Richard Whinfield

Computers provide a marvelous, accessible and space saving way to keep records of all kinds. Records can be kept through a variety of programs including word processing. With each of these programs it is simply a matter of entering data in a logical fashion and storing it on a disk for easy retrieval.

The kinds of records which a professor might wish to keep include class records (with automatic grading), student records for a variety of purposes including plans of study, student progress and assessment of load. Bibliographies, reports, publications, project budgets--any data which can be classified--can be kept on computer disks.

One must devise one's own system for classifying records. The progress starts with naming each file in a logical, orderly way, naming each disk (by some categorization scheme), and filing disks in a logical order in accessible locations. There are programs available for keeping track of each file, set and subset of files, but careful planning and organizing are necessary. Thereafter, immediate access to any file one would like is possible.

## NETWORKING/TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Thomas J. Sork

The use of microcomputers, modems, and telecommunications software for working on collaborative writing and research projects was discussed. Successful co-authorship using exchange of text files over long-distance telephone lines at 1200 baud was described. The importance of having compatible computers and word processing software was emphasized as was the desirability of employing text-compression utilities to reduce file transmission costs. John Buskey, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and Tom Sork, University of British Columbia, have used Kaypro II computers, Hayes-compatible modems, Modem 7-compatible software, Perfect Writer word processing software, and public domain text-compression utilities (which reduce the length of text files by about 35%) to co-author several papers, articles, chapters. Text files have been exchanged without errors at 1200 baud using regular long-distance phone lines during off-peak hours. Costs are more than regular mail service but less the 24-hour express service. The advantages of rapid turn-around and ease of editing make this technique desirable for some collaborative projects.

INTERNATIONAL ADULT EDUCATION TASK FORCE
REPORTS AND REFLECTIONS ON INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

A preconference session and reception as well as two regular sessions were held in addition to the business meeting. The preconference session was a forum format in which participants shared views and reflections on their own international adult education activities and emerging issues. A highlight of the session keyed on the British-North American exchange professorship activities funded in part by a Kellogg grant, with additional support from the British Council. The meeting was followed by a reception for all international visitors and those interested in international adult education.

The two "regular" sessions were as follows:

1. Symposium: Reports and reflections from five international conferences (proceedings for three of these appear on the following pages)

2. Adult Education in Socialist Countries (Jindra, Kulich) on the Eastern European experience and Helius Dearpudah on a view from a third world perspective (proceedings not available).

All sessions were designed to encourage informal exchange among participants about their interests in international adult education as well as any activities in which they were involved.

# AN AMERICAN IN PARIS - UNESCO, 1985

John A. Niemi

"You're an American! I thought that the United States had pulled out of UNESCO." This was the opening reaction of people I met at the Fourth International Conference of Adult Education held in Paris from March 19-29, 1985. I informed my new acquaintances that I was not an official government delegate, but a representative of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education and a delegate of the International Council of Adult Education. My response was often met by an attitude of helplessness expressed as follows: "Your country has both money and power. Why not give us the dignity of the word? It is only through an international agency like UNESCO that we can be assured of a forum in which to practice our multi-lateral policy."

The setting for this once-a-decade conference was UNESCO's international headquarters in Paris. Attendance reached an all-time high, with 639 delegates representing 122 countries along with 302 other participants-nongovernment agencies (NGO's), observers of nonmember states, and representatives from national liberation movements.

When the delegates gathered for the opening plenary session, the atmosphere seemed strained as Director General Amadou Mahtar M'Bow welcomed the delegates and outlined their task. The withdrawal of the United States on December 31, 1984, and notice that Great Britain intends to withdraw on December 31, 1985, clouded this future oriented session. In contrast to his customary impassioned style, the Director General was low-keyed.

The format of the conference included plenary sessions and meetings of two commissions. Some agenda items were covered in plenary sessions; others were discussed by the commissions. Instead of focusing on the specific concerns assigned to the plenary, the presentations (called "interventions") were descriptive accounts of current activities--"a vanity fair" available in five languages: Arabic, English, French, Russian, and Spanish. As a student of comparative adult education, I initially found this historical and contemporary information interesting. But the overload presented in seven plus daily hours of "interventions" was exhausting, especially as the information was used to bolster national pride instead of to provide new directions.

The NGO's focused, on the other hand, on specific concerns. A key NGO was the International Council of Adult Education, which met beforehand at the Paris headquarters of "Peuple et Culture." The purpose was to organize working groups to give input to national delegations in making recommendations. The plenary presentation by Nita Barrow, President of the Council,

was so well received that it became the genesis of the conference's declaration: "The Right to Learn."

The last plenary session found delegates approving the final draft based on a synthesis of conference deliberations. It was interesting to learn about behind the scenes politics. Although the Nordic countries agreed on a united front, fear of reaction back home often hindered deliberations. The enormous effort of the Canadians to assume leadership lost though American and British actions was evident. The consequent growing influence of Eastern European countries brought comments about power politics within the North (East-West).

As I walked through the headquarters before leaving, I reflected on the future of UNESCO, with the almost certain reduction in programs, the cutback in publications and their dissemination as world literature, and the decline of a forum for international meeting and understanding.

## BUILDING A NEW ORGANIZATION ACROSS CULTURES: REFLECTIONS ON THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR SOCIAL COMMITMENT IN ADULT EDUCATION

Victoria Marsick

Approximately 110 persons from twenty different cultural backgrounds met for one week in Sweden in July 1985 at two folk schools to share their experience and research in promoting social action through adult education. Not unexpectedly, the largest representation came from Scandinavia, followed by other countries in Europe, the U.S.A. and Canada. A small group represented minorities in these countries as well as various countries in Latin America, the Middle East and Africa. Participants included both professors and practitioners.

The conference was sponsored by the International League for Social Commitment in Adult Education, a non-profit organization formed in June 1984 out of the belief that adult education can be a powerful force against social inequality and injustice. The League does not represent governments. It is a collection of individuals pledged to assist one another in their work toward social change through adult education.

The conference began at Llunjskille on the West Coast and moved mid-week to Sange-Saaby on the East Coast via a day's bus ride. The theme of the conference was the League's charter which encourages participation in dialogue on critical social issues and education against forces that perpetuate oppression and powerlessness. The tone was personal, individuals having come because of a common interest not always shared by professional and business circles. The ambience was hospitable. The Swedes

arranged opportunities to understand their culture and that of the folk schools in which the conference took place.

Sessions included both formal presentations and less formal discussions. Some time was allowed each day for League business. The same democratic organizing process was used that had been successfully employed at the founding conference, based on the New England "town meeting" concept. Since the League was only a year old, questions had to be answered around its organization and governance programs, membership, communications and networking. New Officers were nominated and elected. And a venue was selected for next year's conference: the University of Nottingham, England, from July 13-18.

Cross-cultural interaction always brings a myriad of opportunities to examine one's own assumptions and cultural biases. This conference was no exception. Some of my personal observations follow.

The conference was designed for "old" hands to the League. New people wanted to explore issues that had already been raised in the founding conference around what social commitment meant to them. They were not ready for organized topic sessions delving into research. A group of participants met early in the week to request changes, but some of the organizers found it difficult to adjust the schedule accordingly even though the founding conference held in 1984 was built around this kind of flexibility.

The call for more dialogue was supported by some practitioners who felt that discussions were too "academic" and not sufficiently oriented to the "real world." A group of women from many cultures also supported a need for more interaction and opportunity to explore perspectives. Some women reacted against what they felt to be male organizing principles of hierarchy and formality. Several Scandinavians, however, were perplexed by this separation of theory and practice in the North American world.

A compromise position was suggested by a Scandinavian allowing for shortened sessions so that time could be allowed for dialogue without sacrificing prepared papers. However, questions of flexibility continued to be raised, particularly after the long Wednesday bus ride which broke down barrier of reserve and catalyzed caucusing among people who shared common interests. Third Worlders wondered aloud at the differing priorities for social action between them and Western countries. Some Scandinavians expressed impatience with what was perceived as an American preoccupation with procedures in following Roberts Rules of Order or in ensuring that by-laws were not overturned, while some Americans could not understand why the conference schedule could not be adjusted to better meet perceived emerging needs.

Before the week was out, a Latin American participant found a colleague who could translate for him so he could speak in Spanish, and a Mauritian found someone to translate into French. After this, it became almost comic to begin a comment with "I'll speak in...." to make a point about the language barrier. The Swedes pointed out that some of the difficulty in engaging in spontaneous "dialogue" in sessions was due to the fact that English was a second language.

Despite these differences, participants found themselves pleased with the opportunity to talk with like-minded people and to contemplate the reality that social commitment is often not achieved without personal hardship and danger. Heated discussion took place many times, as for example in discussing whether or not the League could find itself subject to infiltration by subversive elements or in perceptions of sexism and other kinds of oppression at the conference itself.

In the closing session, people sat quietly in a large circle, attentive to whoever might choose to comment on the conference. Many of the participants almost tearfully gave tribute to the League, the week, and the friendships formed. People of the U.S.A. were moved by a Latin American who said that he finally came to know Americans who were not imperialists. And a Swedish colleague touched the hearts of everyone by presenting wild flowers to those who came the furthest distances.

## THE UNITED NATIONS WOMEN'S DECADE CONFERENCE AND THE NGO FORUM '85, NAIROBI, KENYA, JULY, 1985

Dr. Beverly B. Cassara

This is a brief report about the women's meetings this last summer in Nairobi--the official United Nations Women's Decade Conference with 153 countries represented and the Forum '85 attended by women from non-governmental organizations from approximately 160 countries. Since I was not an official delegate my experience was with the NGO Forum. However, I am proud to say that one of my former students who now lives and works on the Island of St. Kitts was an official delegate from that government to the United Nations official conference.

Depending on your source of information, you will hear that there were anywhere from 13,000 to 17,000 women in attendance. There could be no precise count since hundreds of women put up with friends in private homes, and many women there had not officially registered. From the TV footage probably all of you have an idea of the general scene--women in the thousands in many kinds of national costumes, meeting together, for the official UN meeting at the beautiful polished-wood-panelled Kenyatta Conference Center, and for the NGO Conference, indoors

and outdoors on the lawns of the University of Nairobi which closed down the semester several weeks early to allow the conference to use the facilities.

Problems make news and editors want headlines. I have heard that the press made much of the housing problem. It is true there was a problem. No one likes to be moved from a hotel room for which they have paid well in advance. However, the women involved ably and firmly demanded satisfaction and got it. The government even erected a tent city in the suburbs with comfortable beds and showers and all. Some persons I know who stayed there found it a pleasant experience.

As for the NGO Conference, every person of the 15,000 or so who attended had a different experience from the next. There were over 1000 workshops, continuous showing of movies from many countries and wonderful impromtu happenings everytime women from several countries found themselves on the same spot of the lawn or in the same waiting line. I firmly believe that the learnings and the friendships that developed from such situations were the most valuable and enduring aspects of the conference. Among innumerable features one could mention was the peace tent where women from east and west and north and south met to discuss the most troublesome and important issues of our time. Also I could mention the discussions hosted by Betty Friedan under the fig tree. Above all I should tell you that our own Dame Nita Barrow, President of the International Council for Adult Education, was co-chair and convenor of the NGO Forum. The ICAE Newsletter quotes her as saying:

> In spite of the gloomy statistical indices which are available in the world survey of women's current status world-wide, in spite of the fact that we shake our heads and rue the elusiveness of freedom and equality, we have caught a glimpse of the word 'possible' and we know that we feel different, that we are different women from the women we were ten years ago. No, not just older. Stronger. Bolder. Surer.

Focusing attention now on the official UN Conference, you remember that this is the third in the decade--the first was in Mexico City in 1975, the second in Copenhagen in 1980. The goals of the Decade were "equality, development and peace." The 153 official delegates met in general debate for seven days assessing the progress made toward these goals in the decade. The document which resulted from their deliberations was entitled "Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women," with an eye to achievements by the year 2000. Each of the 371 paragraphs

of the document were discussed separately and adopted by concensus except for four controversial paragraphs which were put to a roll call vote. They concerned the following issues:

1. the use of the word "zionism" was replaced by the words "all forms of racism;"
2. the United States voted against (with 29 other countries abstaining) on a question relating to the "lack of political will of certain developed countries" to eliminate obstacles that make women's position unequal;
3. call for sanctions against So. Africa (121 in favor with the U.S. against and 13 abstentions);
4. on implementation of the UN Program of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights (adopted on a roll call vote of 97 for and Australia, Israel, and the U.S. against, with 29 abstentions).

The important major issues were unanimously adopted:

1. Women and Power--affective participation of women in high level positions;
2. Women and Technology--access of women, benefits for women, and protections from adverse effects;
3. Value of the Women's Economic Contributions--including agriculture and domestic work among other things;
4. Statistics on Women--collect, analyze, and utilize;
5. Women Without Men--rights and needs of single women, especially single mothers;
6. Violence Against Women and Other Abuses--including family violence, and sexual harassement among other forms;
7. Family Planning--information, education and means.

Many hours of discussion on each of these issues included related subjects of health, marriage rights, resources, development issues, needs of special groups, the need for regional and international cooperation and hundreds of others as you would expect.

What did the two conferences accomplish? There is no question that they focused the attention of the world on the issue of respect for women, rights of women and responsibilities of women. It drew women from all over the world together and not just the elite or the great leaders, but also women who are involved in the concerns of women in the smallest villages of the world. One-third of the delegates were from developing countries. This may have been one small step for womankind--but on the other hand it may have been a bigger step than we have any way to know or judge right now so close to the event.